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## NEWS RELEASE

30<sup>th</sup> Medical Command(DS)

Public Affairs Office

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06221-17-2203/2828

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### *Operation Starlight*

## **Mouflage artists keep it real during US and UK joint medical exercise**

**HOHENFELS, Germany** – When it comes to medical training, nothing can perfectly replicate what troops will see when they reach the battlefield or working in a combat support hospital. However, when preparing for possible contingency operations, creating and executing realistic, full-speed training is key.

That's where the mouflage, or casualty simulation experts, come in to play during Operation Starlight.

Throughout the joint medical exercise between the 212<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital and the United Kingdom's 208<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital, Liverpool, the mouflage team worked tirelessly to put realistic looking casualties onto the battlefield and into the hospital personnel's care.

"The makeup and the wounds on the casualties have been incredible," said Master Sgt. Ernesto Nieto, a 30<sup>th</sup> Medical Command combat medic and an observer controller for the exercise. "It really adds a lot to the training value, and adds a lot of realism to the simulated scenarios."

During the exercise, mock patients are inserted into the scenario at pre-assigned times, which are unknown to the members of the hospital charged with providing care. Some patients are walk-ins with minor injuries like back pain and sprained ankles. Others are simulated casualties with gun-shot wounds and severe burns, that have been medically evacuated from the battlefield to receive care at CSH's Level-III facility.

Great care is taken by entirely British crew of mouflage "artists" to make the injuries ordered for each patient in the exercise.

"We definitely want do the best we can to put lifelike wounds on the patients," said Cpl. Paul Birkby, a driver and radio operator with the 208<sup>th</sup> FH(L). "We all have different roles within casualty simulation training. Some of us have worked together before during training exercises in the UK, but this is fun and gives us some more experience."

The added training value is paramount, according to Cpl. Gary Lyon, a 208<sup>th</sup> FH(L) mental health nurse. "You can have a paper on a casualty simply stating what a casualty is and what's wrong with him, but people tend to turn off, and it's not real," explained Lyon.

"When an ambulance rides up on a patient, you get different reactions from a piece of paper listing symptoms versus seeing these types of wounds," Lyon said. "The mouflage tends to make it more real."

The deputy commander for nursing of the 212<sup>th</sup> CSH, Maj. Cory Williams, agrees and said that these scenarios and casualties have provided some outstanding training for all of the Soldiers involved.

“This is some of the best medical simulated training that I’ve seen in my 18 years of being in Army medicine,” said Williams.